

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-21. (Canceled.)

22. (Currently Amended) A method for accessing switch functionality from an external endpoint, comprising:

providing at least one of a switch and server, at least one internal endpoint, and at least one external endpoint, each of the at least one internal and external endpoints being in communication with the at least one of a switch and server and being associated with a common user, wherein the at least one internal endpoint comprises a plurality of feature activators for activating a plurality of features;

receiving from the at least one external endpoint an incoming contact comprising a packet-switched text communication comprising an identity of at least one of a feature activator and a feature;

determining, by the switch, that the text communication comprises a feature command and is not intended to be forwarded to a subscriber;

determining, by the switch, based on the source address of the text communication, that the sender has authorization to request invocation of a feature activator and/or feature;

parsing, by the switch, the text communication and comparing, by the switch, the parsed text against a set of feature commands to identify the at least one of the selected feature activator and feature;

determining when the identified at least one of a feature activator and feature has a corresponding entry in a stored list of identifiers, the entries in the stored list of identifiers being associated with at least one of (i) a plurality of feature activator identifiers associated with the plurality of feature activators and (ii) a plurality of feature identifiers associated with the plurality of features; and

when the identified at least one of a feature activator and feature has a corresponding entry in the stored list, activating at least one of the associated feature activator and feature.

23. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the contact is received at the external port of the at least one of a switch and server from an originator terminal utilizable external to a premises serviced by the at least one of a switch and server and not having an extension associated with any internal endpoint serviced by the at least one of a switch and server.

24. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the determining step comprises mapping the identified at least one of a feature activator and feature associated with the incoming contact to the corresponding entry in the stored list.

25. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the corresponding entry is at least one of the plurality of feature activator identifiers.

26. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the corresponding entry is at least one of the plurality of feature identifiers.

27. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the incoming contact is originated by an originator terminal comprising a computer coupled to a packet-switched network external to a premises serviced by the at least one of a switch and server.

28. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein in the activating step the at least one of a switch and server processes the associated at least one of the plurality of feature activator identifiers and plurality of feature identifiers as if the user had pressed the associated feature activator in the internal endpoint while the internal endpoint was in service and off hook.

29. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the plurality of features are selected from one or more of the following sets of features: (a) features that are invoked prior to placing a contact, (b) features that are invoked during a contact, (c) features that are non-contact associated that do not require display interactions, (d) features that are non-contact associated that require display interactions, (e) features that are operated against contacts not associated with the activating station, and (f) features that are operated against an alerting contact.

30. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the plurality of features comprise a plurality of the following features: analog bridged appearance select, abbreviated dialing, active appearance select, automatic appearance select, automatic call back, automatic intercom, autodial, bridged appearance selection, call appearance selection, call forwarding all, call forwarding busy/no answer, call forwarding deactivation, call park, call unpark, call pick-up, conference no answer, conference, calling party number block, calling party number unblock, dial intercom, directed call pick-up, drop last added party, drop call, exclusion (which prevents a user from being active on the same call on a physical port and a trunk port), extend call off-at least one of a switch and server enable (to enable the mapping agent), extend call off-at least one of a switch and server disable (to disable the mapping agent), group page, handover, held appearance select, hunt night service, last number dialed, malicious call trace activation, malicious call trace deactivation, manual message waiting, priority call, send all calls, manual signaling, transfer on hang up, transfer to voice mail, and trunk night service.

31. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the identified at least one of a feature activator and feature is associated with an internal extension associated with the at least one of a switch and server.

32. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein, in the stored list, the plurality of feature activator identifiers are based upon activator position on the internal endpoint.

33. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the at least one internal endpoint comprises a plurality of internal endpoints, each of the plurality of internal endpoints having a plurality of corresponding feature activators and wherein a common identified at least one of a feature activator and feature defines a first feature for a first internal endpoint and a second feature for a second internal endpoint and the first and second features are different.

34. (Original) The method of Claim 22, further comprising:
providing an electronic message to the user after the activating step, the electronic message indicating the success or failure of feature activation.

35. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the packet-switched communication comprises a source address, a destination address, and a body, wherein the destination address is associated with the at least one of switch and server.

36. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the packet-switched communication comprises a source address, a destination address, and a body, wherein the identity of the at least one of feature activator and feature is located in the body.

37. (Original) The method of Claim 22, wherein the packet-switched communication comprises a header and a body, wherein the identity of the at least one of feature activator and feature is located in the header.

38-46. (Canceled.)

47. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein the text communication has text and domain name portions, the text portion comprising the identity of the at least one of the selected feature activator and feature and the domain name portion comprising the electronic address of the switch or a component thereof.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 22, wherein the text communication has a sign-in name handle and domain name portions, the sign-in name handle portion comprising the identity of the at least one of the selected feature activator and feature and the domain name portion comprising the electronic address of the switch or a component thereof.

49. (Canceled)

50. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 22, further comprising:
~~the switch detecting, by the switch,~~ a change of status of the telephone;
~~the switch determining, by the switch,~~ whether or not an external endpoint has requested notification of the status change; and

when an external endpoint has requested notification of the status change, generating and sending to the external endpoint a text notification of the status change.

51. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 22, further comprising:
~~the switch generating, by the switch, and sending a text message to the external endpoint,~~
the message comprising a current feature setting of the telephone.

52. (Currently Amended) A system including a switch being in communication with at least one internal telephone having a plurality of feature activators and associated features and at least one external endpoint, wherein the switch is operable to control feature invocation by the internal telephone, the system comprising:

a feature server operable to:

(i) receive, from the at least one external endpoint, an incoming contact comprising a packet-switched text communication comprising an identity of at least one of a selected feature activator and feature;

(ii) determine that the text communication comprises a feature command and is not intended to be forwarded to a subscriber;

(iii) determine, based on the source address of the text communication, that the sender has authorization to request invocation of a feature activator and/or feature;

(iv) parse the text communication and comparing the parsed text against a set of feature commands to identify the at least one of the selected feature activator and feature;

(v) determine when the identified at least one of a selected feature activator and feature has a corresponding entry in a stored list of identifiers, the entries in the stored list of identifiers being associated with at least one of (i) (A) a plurality of feature activator identifiers associated with the plurality of feature activators and (ii) (B) a plurality of feature identifiers associated with the plurality of features; and

(vi) when the identified at least one of a selected feature activator and feature has a corresponding entry in the stored list, activate at least one of the associated identified feature activator and feature.

53. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 52, wherein the contact is received at the external port of the switch from an originator terminal utilizable external to a premises serviced by the switch and not having an extension associated with any internal endpoint serviced by the switch; and

wherein the feature server maps the identified at least one of a selected feature activator and feature associated with the incoming contact to the corresponding entry in the stored list.

54. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 53, wherein the corresponding entry is associated with at least one of the plurality of feature activator identifiers.

55. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 53 53, wherein the corresponding entry is associated with at least one of the plurality of feature identifiers.

56. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 52, wherein the system server processes the associated at least one of the plurality of feature activator identifiers and plurality of feature identifiers as if the user had pressed the associated feature activator in the internal endpoint while the internal endpoint was in service and off hook.

57. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 52, wherein the plurality of features are selected from one or more of the following sets of features: (a) features that are invoked prior to placing a contact, (b) features that are invoked during a contact, (c) features that are non-contact associated that do not require display interactions, (d) features that are non-contact associated that require display interactions, (e) features that are operated against contacts not associated with the activating station, and (f) features that are operated against an alerting contact.

58. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 57, wherein the plurality of features comprise a plurality of the following features: analog bridged appearance select, abbreviated dialing, active appearance select, automatic appearance select, automatic call back, automatic intercom, autodial, bridged appearance selection, call appearance selection, call forwarding all, call forwarding busy/no answer, call forwarding deactivation, call park, call unpark, call pick-up,

conference no answer, conference, calling party number block, calling party number unblock, dial intercom, directed call pick-up, drop last added party, drop call, exclusion (which prevents a user from being active on the same call on a physical port and a trunk port), extend call off-at least one of a switch and server enable (to enable the mapping agent), extend call off-at least one of a switch and server disable (to disable the mapping agent), group page, handover, held appearance select, hunt night service, last number dialed, malicious call trace activation, malicious call trace deactivation, manual message waiting, priority call, send all calls, manual signaling, transfer on hang up, transfer to voice mail, and trunk night service.

59. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 52, wherein the system server provides an electronic message to the user after the activating step, the electronic message indicating the success or failure of feature activation.

60. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 52, wherein the text communication has text and domain name portions, the text portion comprising the identity of the at least one of the selected feature activator and feature and the domain name portion comprising an electronic address different from an electronic address of the internal telephone.

61. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 52, wherein the text communication has a sign-in name handle and domain name portions, the sign-in name handle portion comprising the identity of the at least one of the selected feature activator and feature and the domain name portion comprising an electronic address different from an electronic address of the internal telephone.

62. (Canceled)

63. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 52, wherein the switch detects a change of status of the telephone; determines whether or not an external endpoint has requested notification of the status change; and when an external endpoint has requested notification of the status change, generates and sends to the external endpoint a text notification of the status change.

64. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 52 wherein the switch generates and sends a text message to the external endpoint of a current feature setting of the telephone.

65. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

~~a switch detecting, by a switch,~~ a change of status of a telephone controlled by the switch;

~~the switch determining, by the switch,~~ whether or not an external endpoint has requested notification of the status change; and

when an external endpoint has requested notification of the status change, generating and sending to the external endpoint a text notification of the ~~status-change~~ change;

receiving from the external endpoint an incoming contact comprising a packet-switched text communication comprising an identity of at least one of a selected feature activator and feature;

determining, by the switch, that the text communication comprises a feature command and is not intended to be forwarded to a subscriber;

determining, by the switch, based on the source address of the text communication, that the sender has authorization to request invocation of a feature activator and/or feature;

parsing, by the switch, the text communication and comparing, by the switch, the parsed text against a set of feature commands to identify the at least one of the selected feature activator and feature.

determining when the identified at least one of a selected feature activator and feature has a corresponding entry in a stored list of identifiers, the entries in the stored list of identifiers being associated with at least one of (i) a plurality of feature activator identifiers associated with the plurality of feature activators and (ii) a plurality of feature identifiers associated with the plurality of features; and

when the identified at least one of a feature activator and feature has a corresponding entry in the stored list, activating at least one of the associated identified feature activator and feature.

66. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 65, further comprising:
~~the switch generating and sending, by the switch,~~ a text message to the external endpoint,
the message comprising a current feature setting of the telephone.

67. (Canceled)

68. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 67 65, wherein the contact is received at the external port of the switch from an originator terminal utilizable external to a premises serviced by the switch and not having an extension associated with any internal endpoint serviced by the switch; and

wherein the determining step comprises mapping the identified at least one of a selected feature activator and feature in the incoming contact to the corresponding entry in the stored list.

69. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 67 65, wherein the corresponding entry is associated with at least one of the plurality of feature activator identifiers.

70. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 67 65, wherein the corresponding entry is associated with at least one of the plurality of feature identifiers.

71. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 67 65, wherein in the activating step the switch processes the associated at least one of the plurality of feature activator identifiers and plurality of feature identifiers as if the user had pressed the associated feature activator in the internal endpoint while the internal endpoint was in service and off hook.

72. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 67 65, wherein the text communication has text and domain name portions, the text portion comprising the identity of the at least one of the selected feature activator and feature and the domain name portion comprising the electronic address of the switch or a component thereof.

73. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 67 65, wherein the text communication has sign-in name handle and domain name portions, the sign-in name handle

portion comprising the identity of the at least one of the selected feature activator and feature and the domain name portion comprising the electronic address of the switch or a component thereof.

74. (Canceled)

75. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 67 65, wherein the plurality of features are selected from one or more of the following sets of features: (a) features that are invoked prior to placing a contact, (b) features that are invoked during a contact, (c) features that are non-contact associated that do not require display interactions, (d) features that are non-contact associated that require display interactions, (e) features that are operated against contacts not associated with the activating station, and (f) features that are operated against an alerting contact.

76. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 74 65, wherein the plurality of features comprise a plurality of the following features: analog bridged appearance select, abbreviated dialing, active appearance select, automatic appearance select, automatic call back, automatic intercom, autodial, bridged appearance selection, call appearance selection, call forwarding all, call forwarding busy/no answer, call forwarding deactivation, call park, call unpark, call pick-up, conference no answer, conference, calling party number block, calling party number unblock, dial intercom, directed call pick-up, drop last added party, drop call, exclusion (which prevents a user from being active on the same call on a physical port and a trunk port), extend call off-at least one of a switch and server enable (to enable the mapping agent), extend call off-at least one of a switch and server disable (to disable the mapping agent), group page, handover, held appearance select, hunt night service, last number dialed, malicious call trace activation, malicious call trace deactivation, manual message waiting, priority call, send all calls, manual signaling, transfer on hang up, transfer to voice mail, and trunk night service.

77. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 67 65, further comprising: providing an electronic message to the user after the activating step, the electronic message indicating the success or failure of feature activation.

78. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium comprising executable instructions operable to perform the steps of Claim 22.

79. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium comprising executable instructions operable to perform the steps of Claim 65.